

COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

Draft Minutes Subject to Approval at the December 4, 2009 Council Meeting

ATTENDEES:

Council Members: Steven Stubbs, JoAnn Shopbell, Russell Patterson, Nancy Henry, Walter Jastremsky, Ron Schow, Rod Howells and Deseret Baker

Ex-Officio Members: Steven Snow, Doug Clapp, Nancy Upchurch, Aylee Schaefer, Jean Taylor and Deedra Hunt

Others: Cindy Schreiner, Holly Thomas-Mowery, Val Sturm, Representative Wendy Jaquet, Emily Turner, Ray Lockary, Ron Mowery, Reno Wolf, Joelynn Warr, Julie Johnson, Janae Roche, Katheryn Fuller, Jonathan Price, Leslie Price, June Flannery, Dana Dougherty, and Linda Humphreys.

Introductions: The meeting was called to order by Steven Stubbs and introductions were made.

Approve Minutes of May 1, 2009: Joann said a correction should be made to page 4 “*Joelynn said the second way an interpreter can earn qualification is through **CERTIFICATION BY the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), WHICH HAS BEEN INTEGRATED WITH RID.*** Joann made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Ron seconded the motion, the motion passed.

Steven Stubbs asked for a moment of silence for the events of September 11, 2001.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Budget Fiscal Year 2010: Steven Snow said the budget for the Council has been affected by the holdbacks directed by the Governor’s office. Steven said like other state agencies, the Council has been required to show cost savings. He said to make the cost savings, staff travel has been eliminated for the rest of this fiscal year. He said in addition, in order to prevent employee furlough; funds have been transferred from the operating budget to the personnel budget. Steven said the Governor did not recommend funding for interpreter services, therefore there is a request for supplemental funding of eight thousand dollars to the legislature to provide for interpreter services, however, he said changes have to be approved by the legislature and there is no guarantee. Steven Snow said he has met with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation to request \$7,500 in stimulus funding for additional interpreter services. He said in addition, he has requested from Vocational Rehabilitation, \$10,000 to provide new equipment for each of our demonstration and loan centers and monies to continue the equipment subsidy program. He said the request has been submitted and we are currently waiting for approval. Steven Snow said there will probably be a request for additional holdback since there is still a large deficit in the state budget.

Budget Year 2011: Steven Snow said the budget request for 2011 has been submitted. He said \$25,000 has been requested for interpreter services. Steven said there is a request for a change in employee compensation of \$1,200 which will cover the cost of insurance premium increases. Steven said the request for operating will remain the same. Trustee and Benefit and Capitol expenses are requested. The grand total requested for Fiscal year 2011 will be \$180,200. Steven said this amount would have to be recommended by the Governor and approved by the Legislature at the next session

Legislation: Steven Snow said he proposed legislation through the Department of Financial Management to *set out state-wide policy regarding enabling caption decoders in all public places 24/7*. Steven said this legislation would be sponsored by Representative Donna Pence in the House and he was still looking for a sponsor in the Senate and would be contacting Senator Bert Brackett for possible support. Steven said the proposed legislation was rejected by the Department of Financial Management therefore it would not be brought forward this year.

Emergency Preparedness: Steven said he has met with the Bureau of Homeland Security discussing services to be provided to deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the event of an emergency. He said there are many matters under discussion including: an Emergency Alert System (EAS); Developing an embedded video system for sign language; implementation of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for deaf and hard hearing; and developing Idaho's Emergency Operation Plan including Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services. Steven said these are joint efforts with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Homeland Security. Steven said he will be involved with supporting these efforts and will keep the Council informed as the work progresses

Idaho Court Systems: Steven Snow said there are many incidences involving deaf people in cases of court violations. Steven said he has met with Chief Justice Daniel Eismann and Steven will be consulting and assisting with developing state-wide policy and procedures regarding the legal system and deaf and hard of hearing persons. Steven said this is a joint effort with the Idaho Supreme Court Administration. Steven said he will continue to partner with the Idaho Supreme Court Administration and keep the council informed of the efforts and accomplishments.

CDHH Council Member Appointments: Steven said he was informed recently that Council members will be appointed soon. He said correspondence from the Governor's office should be received in the near future.

Other Business: Steven said he has been appointed as a member on several Boards of Directors including: Disability Rights of Idaho (formerly Co-Ad) which will meet next week; and the Idaho Board of Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind which will meet next week. He is a member of other boards including the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, Idaho Sound Beginnings and Idaho Sound Beginnings. Steven said he is busy with all of the board meetings but wants to keep working with all of them to create better services or opportunities for Idaho's deaf and hard of hearing population.

Steven said CDHH has received a grant to provide a Public Access Video Phone. He said with the uncertainty of the move in this building, he was not sure if CDHH's office would be the best place for access for deaf people. Steven asked for suggestions where the phone should be installed. Deseret Baker suggested the Meridian Public Library since they are deaf friendly with the Linda Bove collection of deaf and hard of hearing videos. The Council agreed that the Meridian Public Library would be a good location for the Public Access Video Phone. Steven Snow said he would contact the library and report back to the Council.

Steven said there is discussion about moving the Council from the Department of Health and Welfare to the Department of Administration. He said the talks are in a preliminary stage and he will keep the Council informed. Ron said we need to be cautious if we move to a different agency since Health and Welfare supports the Council with budgetary issues such as rent, utilities, security, etc. Steven said he is aware of the support from Health and Welfare and will make sure that those supports are in place if or when we move to a different agency umbrella. Steven said the office move in this building is supposed to be completed soon, but there is an issue with the contractors so for now we are still waiting to be informed of an actual move date.

Steven encouraged the Board members to continue relationships with the legislature as those voices are important.

OUTREACH/SUBSIDY PROGRAM: Cindy said the program has been very successful since it was started 10 years ago and has provided a total of 277 various pieces of equipment to consumers throughout the years. She said there is more activity in the larger cities such as Boise and Twin Falls, but all the centers are active. Cindy said there has been a request to Vocational Rehabilitation for some stimulus monies to purchase new demonstration and loan equipment for all the centers. She said there is also a request for Vocational Rehabilitation to provide money to continue the subsidy program since currently there is not money allocated from the legislature to continue the program. Cindy said she visited Senior Centers throughout southwestern Idaho to inform them of the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and to provide information about the subsidy program and other services available to senior citizens who have a hearing loss.

REPRESENTATIVE WENDY JAQUET PRESENTATION: Representative Wendy Jaquet presented a statewide budget review. She said actual funds received through tax revenues are less than forecasted; therefore more budget holdbacks will be required. She said the Governor will be meeting with legislators next week to discuss how to meet the additional budget holdbacks. Representative Jaquet said she is a supporter of the Council and will support budgetary request in her membership on the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC). Representative Jaquet said she will submit a request for additional funding for interpreter services, but the Council should investigate other sources of funding such as through Vocational Rehabilitation. Representative Jaquet asked for ideas to help with the budget cutbacks.

Representative Jaquet said she has been working with Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind (ISDB) on their budget request, she said ISDB is now considered a “hybrid” agency, unique to state government and will be considered a school for funding purposes thus protected from some budget cuts experienced by other agencies. Representative Jaquet said the school will remain in Gooding for the time being because there is not funding for relocation.

INTERPRETER/DEAF EDUCATION PROGRAM UPDATE: Emily Turner presented information about the Interpreter/Deaf Education program at Idaho State University. Emily said an Associates Degree in Sign Language studies is offered along with a Bachelor’s Degree in Educational Interpreting. Emily said the programs are offered at the Pocatello campus and at the ISU meridian Health Science Center. She said the Bachelor of Science degree at the Meridian Center started this fall with 4 students. Emily said new cohorts will start every odd year (2009, 2011, and 2013). She said the students are prepared for the Educational Interpreters Proficiency Assessment (EIPA) examination at the end of their program. She said there is opportunity for taking the EIPA in Pocatello in the future. She said there is opportunity for 5 interpreters in April, 10 interpreters in June and 5 in November. Emily said Idaho State University offers a Master in Deaf Education which is a 14 month program starting each summer. Emily said Linda Humphreys is the instructor at the Meridian center. Emily said the University is accredited and she is working diligently on getting the Sign Language/Educational Interpreter programs accredited.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:

Vocational Rehabilitation: Doug Clapp said his caseload of deaf or hard of hearing clients started in July of this year. He said he is currently serving 110 clients in the Treasure Valley. He said of the 110 clients, around 55 are deaf and of those 20 are going to school. He said Vocational Rehabilitation pays up to \$1,200 for tuition and \$300 for books. Doug said his office is moving to a new location. He said he will hopefully, depending on budgets, be conducting training for Vocational Rehabilitation counselors in other areas throughout the state to provide information about the needs of deaf or hard of hearing clients.

Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind: Aylee Schaefer has been appointed Interim Administrator. Aylee said school started on August 24 with a total of 79 students. She said there are 50 deaf/hard of hearing students, 24 blind/visually impaired students and 4 others. She said there are 28 deaf students in the day program with 22 in the residential program. She said the school week is currently 4 days. Aylee said the new Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind Advisory Committee has been appointed. She said there are 8 members and the chairman is Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Luna. She said the committee has met 2 times and will continue to meet often. She said the Advisory Committee will be working on several items including statute language and protocols for educational interpreter emergency authorization.

Aylee said she has been in contact with other schools in the Mountain/Plains states and said each state are facing the same problems with budgets and legislation. She said the other states have commended Idaho for the work they have completed for Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Aylee said the Qwest for Arts from Gallaudet will be directing students in a performance on Family Weekend on September 25 and 26th. She said the new Advisory Committee will be introduced to the parents and students and many activities are planned.

Aylee said they received some money from the Infant Toddler program to provide \$50,000 for hearing aids and training.

Department of Labor: Nancy Upchurch said the Department of Labor has been busy with high unemployment claims and people seeking employment. She said the job market is the last to recover in a bad economy. She said unemployment insurance has expired for many people, but the federal government has extended some of the benefits. Nancy said that the federal stimulus monies were used to support the Summer Youth Employment program. She said they offered workshops and mentoring for youth and had 6 hard of hearing students participate.

Department of Education/Special Education: Jean Taylor said it is difficult to find educational interpreters in rural areas in Idaho. She said the emergency request for educational interpreters have increased, however the process for granting an emergency request has not been defined by the Board of Education. She said people are beginning to realize that the new law is really in effect and there is a scramble to take the EIPA test.

Jean said that there is a group meeting in the near future to determine the best method to identify reading difficulties in deaf students. She said the Idaho Reading Indicator is not an appropriate testing method for deaf students.

Commission on Aging: Deedra Hunt said the Commission on Aging like other agencies is experiencing budget holdbacks. She said the Commission is reaching out to seniors and others through the Aged and Disability Resource Centers. She said they are looking for different agencies to partner with to provide outreach services. She said a new website is being developed to connect different agencies with the different needs of senior citizens and people with disabilities. Deedra said that her agency would like to present at the next Council meeting and partner with the Council on different outreach services.

Old/New Business: Nancy Henry said she wanted the Council to know that parents in northern Idaho like and appreciate the Educational Interpreter Act. She said one problem in northern Idaho is that deaf people do not have as many interpreters available in places such as the Social Security offices.

Deseret said she would like to see the Council's website updated. Steven said we will be updating the website as soon as we can.

JoAnn Shopbell said she would like to thank the Council for the years and experiences she had while serving on the Council. Ron Schow said he enjoyed his time and experiences with the Council

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be Friday, December 4, 2009 at the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's office.